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The immense quarry-cave, in which this skeleton was found, it was our good fortune to discover in 1853, and by the connivance of one of the chief dignitaries of the city, we eluded the vigilance of the Turkish authorities, and succeeded in making a thorough exploration of this hitherto unknown cavern. The skeleton of this adventurous explorer (if such he may be styled) was found in the extreme South end of the cave, 100 feet from the entrance, in a deep pit. The bones (of almost giant proportions) gave evidence of having laid in that position for many years, judging from their decayed state, which, however, is not so apparent upon the skull.

How long since he ended his career, though matter of some uncertainty, is obviously no short time, for it is evident that the bats and owls have fluttered over his bones for many long centuries; for the entrance to this large quarry-cave is in the wall of the city, which undoubtedly has been kept carefully closed ever since the subversion of the Frank kingdom of the Holy Land, when the city walls underwent their last reparation.

The position of this cave, a little elevated above the area of the temple, enabled us to solve an enigma which has heretofore been regarded as an '*opprobrium antiquorum*,'—the location of those Cyclopean stones, in their great height in the outer temple wall.

What may be his history, is a still greater matter of uncertainty. We can only conjecture that he was a pilgrim, who, on exploring the labyrinthine halls of this vast grotto, stumbled down into this deep pit, but whether Jew, Christian or Moslem, is altogether matter of query."

September 8th, 1857.

Vice-President BRIDGES in the Chair.

The following extract of a letter from Dr. D. B. McCartee, of Ningpo, China, dated New York, Sept. 3d, 1857, was read :

"I forward a specimen of the 'insect wax' of China. This was said by the naturalists attached to Sir George Staunton's embassy to be the product of the larva of the *Cicada limbata*, and that 'the fly' which 'was observed by Staunton on the coast of Cochin China has curious pectinated appendages on the back, and the whole insect is covered with a white powder, which is imparted to the stems of the plants it inhabits.' This is not the case with the wax of which a specimen is sent. It is the product of a very small insect, a species of *Coccus*, as far as I could make it out. It is deposited near Ningpo on the twigs and smaller branches of a species of *ash*, in granules, giving the twig the appearance of white coral. It is not generally known that it is to be found in the vicinity of Ningpo; and it was only after a search of two years that I succeeded in finding it. * * * * I think Sir George Staunton was deceived by the fact that the larva of a species of *Cicada* corresponding to his description is found upon the same tree, as I myself saw."

Dr. Morris remarked that among the fishes brought from Panama by Dr. Ruschenberger, were found the following Atlantic species which were not previously known to exist in the Pacific: *Exocetus acutus*, *Pristipoma rodo*, *Ephippus faber*.

[September.

Dr. Meigs read the following extract of a letter from Dr. E. A. Abaddie, U. S. N., accompanying the donation of skulls presented by him.

Nos. 1 and 2 are crania taken from the ruins of Gran Quivira; they were brought in by an expedition under the command of Major Carleton, who explored the ruins thoroughly, and presented me No. 1 skull.

No. 3. Was disinterred by myself, and found in the centre of the ruins of the church at Guarra, N. M.

No. 4. Is the skull of Jose Largo, a Mescalero chief, who was killed in a foray near Bosque Redondo, near the Pecos River, N. Mexico.

No. 5. Is the head of a Pueblo Indian, taken from the churchyard of their village Laguna.

No. 6. This skull was found with many other human remains, in a very bad state of preservation, in making excavations in an old field, in Santa Fé, N. Mexico. This head, and the remains found, evidently belonged to the same race of Indians which formed the numerous population of the large towns long since in ruins, and of which so little is known; as Gran Quivira, Abo, Guarra Pecos, old Church, &c.

September 29th, 1857.

Vice-President BRIDGES in the Chair.

The Committee to whom the following papers were referred reported in favor of publication in the Proceedings, viz:

Observations on the Wild Turkey, by John LeConte.

Descriptions of some new Reptiles, collected by the U. S. Exploring Expedition under the command of Capt. Chas. Wilkes, U. S. N., by Charles Girard.

Observations on the Wild Turkey, or GALLOPAVO SYLVESTRIS, of Ray.

BY JOHN LECONTE.

Whoever has compared the Wild Turkey of the United States with the domestic animal of the same genus, must have observed that there existed very striking differences between them. These differences do not consist of slight and unimportant particularities, but in radical disagreements, which ought to remain unchangeable under all circumstances, and which form good specific characteristics.

In the tame bird, the colors vary infinitely, and in the wild one, very considerably. The great mark of distinction is in the enormous palear or dewlap of the former, which extends from the base of the lower mandible to the large caruncles on the lower part of the neck. Whatever alterations may have been produced by long domestication, this palear could not have been formed by an enlargement of the rather loose skin of the neck. It is a specific character, which as in our own bird is not found in the *Meleagris ocellata* of Honduras. It has been observed by my son in a former number of our Proceedings, that all derivative variations are monstrosities, and take place chiefly in those parts, which in a normal state of existence, are impossible in the genus, as we observe in hornless beeves and tailless cats, in feather-crested fowls and solid-footed swine.

The conviction that these two birds were really distinct species has long existed in my mind: more than fifty years ago, when I first saw a Wild Turkey, I 1857.]